



2009 – 2010
Madera County Grand Jury
Final Report
Enterprise Secondary School

Prepared By: Schools Committee

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Introduction:

Pursuant to California Penal Code section 925, on October 2, 2009, the Madera County Grand Jury visited Enterprise Secondary School, 28261 Avenue 14, Madera, California. The Principal conducted a tour of the facility and gave a briefing covering the mission, staffing, operations, resources, and procedures of the school.

Findings:

The school is a component of the Alternative Education Programs established by the Madera County Office of Education to deal with juveniles who are unable, for a number of reasons, to attend regular public schools within the county. The school offers grades 9 through 12 and is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The curriculum is aligned to the State Frameworks and Content Standards. High School students are able to earn credit towards graduation and develop employment skills. Students attending are those who have been:

- a. Expelled from regular schools;
- b. Assigned to the school by Court Order as a condition of probation; or
- c. Determined to have educational needs that can be better met in the alternative education setting.

Juveniles, sentenced as adults to probation, may also attend. Such juveniles do not have mandated attendance as a condition of probation and therefore present more complex attendance and disciplinary problems. The Principal was concerned that overall student safety is compromised due to behavioral issues presented by adult probationary juveniles.

Enrollment is targeted for a maximum of 80 students. Presently 68 males and females are attending. Average class size currently is 16. Subject matter is taught by traditional classroom instruction, alternative educational methods, and computer assisted learning programs. The curriculum is diploma track with some academic electives being offered, as well as limited vocation/technical courses. Approximately 25% of students ultimately graduate.

The school has a staff of 4 full-time and 2 part-time teachers. One full-time probation officer is on-site. The Principal, now in her second year, is the only administrator. Budget reductions have resulted in a number of staffing losses, including a second administrator and all on-site mental

health staff. The Principal indicated that an active search is underway for a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

Many of the students have behavioral and learning problems attributable to mental health issues. When these students have been prescribed medications to address such mental health conditions, the school staff is presently precluded from monitoring or administering such medications during school hours.

The school has a comprehensive security and safety plan. Physical barriers and safeguards are in place, including a metal detector used upon student entrance to the school, which contribute to a safe learning environment. Probation officers may also conduct pat down and other searches for contraband items. A stringent dress code is in place with an innovative program of inducements to encourage compliance.

Conclusions:

The Madera County Grand Jury found this school to be well run with a highly motivated staff that genuinely cares for the juveniles in their charge. The Principal is dynamic, extremely capable, and very innovative. Overall student safety is an issue of concern with the Madera County Grand Jury.

The school is clean and has recently undergone physical modifications and re-painting to enhance efficiencies, improve safety and security, and esthetics.

Recommendations:

- The Madera County Office of Education, in cooperation with the Madera County Department of Probation, should increase overall student safety by addressing the behavioral issues of adult probationary juveniles.
- Appropriately trained staff should be provided that can monitor and administer physician prescribed medications when needed.
- The staff should be augmented with full-time, on-site mental health professionals.

Respondents: Written response required pursuant to PC933(c)

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